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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

Saturday, June 24, 1939

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "CHEESE NOTES." Information from the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and the Bureau of Dairy Industry, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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The American appetite for cheese has been growing for the past 40 years. That's what Department-of-Agriculture cheese statistics show. Here in the United States we've been eating more and more cheese through the years -- but especially during the past 7 or 8 years.

Less than 40 years ago we used an average of 4 pounds of cheese a year for every person. By the time of the World War, our average was up to more than 4 and a quarter pounds. By the period 1925 to 1929 the average had gone up to 4 and a half pounds per person per year. Then came the depression years from '29 to '32 when we ate less cheese. But since 1932 cheese eating has been on the up and up. We now average more than 5 and a third pounds of cheese per person per year.

This upward trend in cheese-eating seems even more striking when you note what some of our other foods have been doing. For example, we've averaged about the same amount of butter per person during the past 5 years as in the 5 years before the World War. No increase in butter eating. As for meat, we don't eat as much meat as our grandfathers did. In fact, there's a distinct decline in meat-eating. We eat less beef, veal, lamb, mutton, and pork. As for potatoes and wheat, we use fewer potatoes and less wheat in the form of flour. But cheese is one food we continue to eat more of.

These cheese statistics, of course, include all kinds of cheese and there are many kinds. Dairy experts say there are nearly 20 distinct varieties

of cheese and more than 400 names for these varieties. Perhaps you'd be interested to hear which kind of cheese has gained most in popularity in this country. The answer is: our plain "American cheese" or cheddar cheese, which gets its name from the village of Cheddar in England where it was first made years ago. Cheddar cheese is made from sweet milk, usually whole milk.

Next to cheddar, cream cheese and neufchatel cheese have increased the most in use.

Swiss cheese also has shown a big increase in popularity. We are using as much as 23 percent more Swiss cheese at present than we were 7 years ago. Swiss cheese is made in many factories in this country, especially in Wisconsin, New York, and Ohio. Swiss cheeses are very large -- may weigh from 150 to 220 pounds, usually in the shape of millstones 3 feet in diameter and 8 to 10 inches thick. Sometimes they are in 25 to 28 pound-blocks. Swiss cheese is made with rennet from whole or partly skimmed milk.

Though we are eating so much more cheese than we used to, we are still behind Germany in cheese production. Germany produced nearly 22 percent of the world total of 3 and three-tenths billion pounds from 1931 to 1935. Germany produced 22 percent while the United States produced 16 percent, Italy 15 percent, and France 14 and a half percent.

By the way, Department-of-Agriculture dairy specialists believe that farm families especially could well afford to eat more cheese. Cheese is such an inexpensive, nourishing food and its flavor is so appetizing. They say that you can make cheese at any time of year and that the job doesn't take a great deal of time. They suggest that when you have a surplus of milk on the farm, you conserve it for later use by making it into cheese. American cheese or cheddar cheese, they say, if properly made can be stored for months and provide valuable food for the family at practically no cost.

6/24/39

If you are interested in making your own cheese at home, you will find 3 Department of Agriculture bulletins very helpful. All 3 of these bulletins are free and you can order them from the Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

If you wish to make American cheddar cheese, send for Farmers' Bulletin No. 1734 called "Making American Cheese on the Farm."

If you wish to make soft neufchatel or cream type, write for Farmers' Bulletin No. 960. According to this bulletin you can make these soft cheese with very little trouble and without spending much for equipment. Though such cheeses are now largely manufactured in factories, you can make cream cheese, pimento cheese, and neufchatel cheese at home for family use. This is another way to use surplus milk for cheese.

Finally, if you wish to make cottage cheese at home, you are welcome to a copy of Farmers' Bulletin No. 1451 called "Making and Using Cottage Cheese in the Home."

As I said, any or all of these cheese bulletins will be sent to you free if you write to the Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., and ask for them. The bulletin on making American cheddar cheese is No. 1734; the one on cream and neufchatel cheese is 960; and the one on cottage cheese is 1451.

That's all the cheese news today.

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